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NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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STATE CONTINUES TO MONITOR HURRICANE EARL'S APPROACH

Review emergency plans, supplies, monitor weather, surf conditions

The projected path of Hurricane Earl continues to place the powerful storm slightly to the east of Delaware's Atlantic Coast, however, emergency management officials and their partners advise the public to take precautions and to be prepared to enact their household and business emergency plans if the track begins to shift to the west as it moves north.

State and local officials are currently conducting conference calls at least twice daily with the National Weather Service for updates on the storm's progress. The calls also allow discussion of available resources statewide and the potential needs of specific areas where a storm might have greater impact. Since forecasters of the National Weather Service are available to state officials at all times, significant developments in the storm and recommended actions can be communicated to the public immediately through the media.

The public is also reminded that those who also monitor weather updates and heed information and directions from emergency management and other officials will be better prepared to safely react to conditions as they evolve. Even after the storm passes, the public is urged to be aware of rough surf and dangerous rip current conditions along the beaches. Rip currents will be a safety factor from Thursday throughout the weekend.

Because of the relative uncertainty of Earl's direction while the storm is still two days away, Delawareans are urged to review their personal emergency plans and inventory emergency supplies now. The storm may only brush by the state with some rain and winds approaching

tropical storm strength on Thursday night and through Friday afternoon, but a shift westward in the track could result in more disruption, the possibility of tidal flooding and power line damage.

For those along the beaches and closer to the coastal areas, it is important to have an evacuation plan, including a destination of their choosing and means of transporting everyone in their household, including pets. Contact phone numbers should be updated and important personal documents should be stored and ready to move if evacuation is required.

For safety and peace of mind, residents should check emergency food supplies for expiration dates, variety and ease of serving and eating. In addition to enough water for drinking and preparing food, supplies should include enough water for sanitation and for pet needs.

Other important emergency supplies include a battery or crank powered radio and several light sources such as flashlights and camping lamps. Many crank or solar powered radios also have built in lights and cell phone chargers. Those who use battery operated radios and lights should check the strength of their batteries.

Suggestions and guides for creating a family emergency plan and building an emergency supply kit are available on several web sites, including www.dema.delaware.gov, www.delawarecitizencorps.org, www.prepared.org, and www.ready.gov.

Current National Weather Service projections still show the storm track beginning to take an eastward turn as it passes by the Outer Banks of North Carolina with the closest approach to Delaware predicted to be on Friday. This fast moving storm is expected to be north and east of the state by late afternoon Friday. There is a possibility of tropical storm force winds of more than 39 mph with gusts up to 45 mph along the coast during the day Friday. Wind force will be less inland.

Rain amounts of 2 to 3 inches along the coast are possible, with lesser amounts inland. Minor tidal flooding is also possible along the coast as far up as the mouth of the Delaware Bay, but beach erosion is not expected to be significant.

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